

THE ORANGE CARD

**Racism, religion and politics
in Northern Ireland**

by FLANN CAMPBELL

Foreword by Lord Brockway



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FOREWORD

This is a noteworthy pamphlet. I have been associated with the struggle for human equality for seventy years but never have I seen the case against racialism stated at greater depth. We are shown clearly that racism has no scientific or rational basis but is a reflection either of exploiting vested interests within human society, of imperialist conquest, or of the disintegration of sick societies. The greatest crimes in history have been committed by racialism, the repressions of imperialism, the slave trade, the massacre of the Jews by Hitler, the present discrimination against ethnic minorities as scapegoats for all social evils.

We are reminded of how the Jewish and Irish immigrants to Britain were described in exactly the same terms as the non-Whites from the Commonwealth are now described. The Jews escaping from Czarist persecution in the 1890s were denounced as "alien hordes" and for their "ghetto mentality". The Irish who came earlier in the 1840s and 1850s were said to be "forming a substratum beneath a more civilised community". Some anti-Semitism and prejudice against the Irish remain, despite the contributions made to our society, but I find hope in the degree of their acceptance (despite the National Front) which gives ground for the belief that racial antagonism to the newcomers from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean will subside as they become integrated into a more equalitarian community. Colour prejudice is not fundamental as the popularity of Black pop singers, T.V. stars and sportsmen and athletes indicates.

It is the section of this study which deals with Ireland that is most revealing. It is hard to believe that prominent British statesmen and historians could have expressed the opinions of the Irish here quoted. The Earl of Beaconsfield, twice Prime Minister, spoke of this "wild, reckless, indolent, uncertain and idolatrous race", Lord Salisbury, three times Prime Minister, called the Irish "Hottentots", Arthur Balfour, another Prime Minister, wrote "all law, all civilisation, in Ireland are the work of England". The historians were as bad. Thomas Carlyle described the Irish as "a black howling Babel of superstitious savages", Froude said they were "essentially unfit for freedom", Freeman, a regius professor at Oxford, declared the U.S.A. "would be a grand land if only every Irishman would kill a negro and be hanged for it".

The author shows that this denigration of the Irish had its source in the English occupation of Ireland, only publicly justifiable on the claim of Anglo-Saxon superiority, the real reason of exploitation hidden. Religion was added, Catholicism

hated after England became Protestant. Orangeism became the organ of this racial prejudice and religious bigotry, camouflaging the basic cause, dividing workers, Protestant and Catholic, destroying solidarity against their economic injustices. "Why do so many Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians (who in Britain would be tolerant, even friendly, towards Catholics) remain so bigoted in Northern Ireland?" asks Flann Campbell. "Not because their theology is fundamentally different from their fellow Protestants in other parts of the world, but because the society in which they live has never lost its settler-planter characteristics."

There is very much more of value in this pamphlet, rich both in its historical background and its comment on present-day individuals, Ian Paisley, Enoch Powell, the National Front leaders. But everything that is written leads to its conclusion—the hope of unity against discrimination and in particular the need for Irish workers, the victims of racialism in Ireland, to join the struggle against racialism in Britain. I congratulate the Connolly Association on publishing the pamphlet, another indication of its service to human equality and freedom.

Fenner Brockway

THE EVIL OF RACISM

Racism—or the categorising of human beings on the basis of alleged superiority or inferiority arising from hereditary differences such as skin-colour, hair-texture, eye-shape or bodily physique—is one of the most evil and irrational political doctrines which has emerged in the long history of mankind.

It is evil because it exploits the most primitive and backward looking instincts in men and women—hatred of foreigners, intolerance towards strangers, the branding of people on the basis of their birth, prejudice and cruelty towards one's fellow citizens. The ultimate symbols of racism are the lynched negro hanging from the tree in Mississippi, the Cromwellian soldiers driving the native Irish "to hell or Connaught", or—worst horror of all—the gas ovens of Auschwitz and Treblinka. Racism dehumanises and decivilises people; it is primitive in its appeal and savage in its consequences.

When combined with religion it distorts and falsifies the true teachings of Christ which—as we all should know but often forget—have as their central belief the love of one's neighbour, and the equality of all men and women in the sight of God. St Paul said: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, for we are all one in Christ."

Politically, racial prejudice has always been an insidious weapon in the hands of reaction, whether it has been the anti-Semitism of the Czarist black hundreds, the Ku Klux Klan in the U.S.A., Catholic royalists in France at the time of Dreyfus, British jingoism of the 1880s, or Orangeism in northern Ireland. Above all, it splits the progressive forces and divides the working class as in Germany during 1929-33, or in the six counties of Ireland at any time during the last two hundred years. It diverts attention away from the real problems of low living standards, unemployment, bad housing, poor social services and overcrowded schools into the false issues of extreme chauvinism, and scientifically nonsensical question of blood purity and the alleged dangers of miscegenation. There is no such thing as pure blood, and the various blood-groups are distributed widely among the different races. Apart from superficial differences such as skin-colour all races and ethnic groups are basically the same physiologically.

Racism is mindless because it has no scientific foundation whatever, and thrives only in an atmosphere of ignorance and superstition. It confuses heredity with environment, mistakes nature for nurture, and offers a false interpretation of history. It strives to separate people on the grounds of genetics when the real differences between racial and ethnic groups arise from culture and history. Basically, it substitutes a kind of demonology for rational argument and sensible discussion.

This non-rational approach to human problems is typical of all Fascist and racist propaganda. Hitler boasted in *Mein Kampf* of his contempt for scholarly values and scientific objectivity. For him, as for all the Nazis, truth was to be found, not in the mind or intellect, but in the emotions, instincts, blood and soil.

John Tyndall, leader of the National Front, constantly stresses that in all racist propaganda the emotions should be given primacy over reasoned argument. The mass of the population, he explains in his magazine *Spearhead*, require only the simplest of political explanations, and are "always moved by feeling much more than by intellect". "What is it that touches a chord in the instincts of the people to whom we appeal?" he writes. "It can often be the most simple and primitive thing. Rather than a speech or a printed article it may be just a flag; it may be a marching column; it may be the sound of a drum; it may be a banner or it may be just the impression of a crowd. None of these things contain in themselves one single argument, one single piece of logic. . . . They are recognised as being the things that appeal to the hidden forces of the human soul." "I believe," he goes on to say, "that our great marches, with drums and flags and banners, have a hypnotic effect on the public, and an immense effect in solidifying the allegiance of our followers, so that enthusiasm can be maintained."

The appeal to the "instincts of the people", the reference to "drums and flags and banners", will strike a familiar note for those who have seen an Apprentice Boys procession or a July 12th demonstration in N. Ireland. Huge banners with strange inscriptions, columns of bowler-hatted and orange-sashed men, pounding Lambeg drums and skirling pipes—these are hardly designed to convey an intellectual argument or make a fine theological point distinguishing Reformer from Papist. On the contrary, they are deliberately planned to appeal to primitive group-emotions among the marchers and onlookers, to intimidate opponents, and to assert the dominance of one caste over another.

Some of the worst mass atrocities in history have been committed in the name of racism. It is estimated, for example, that about 15 million negroes were captured on the west coast of Africa and shipped under conditions of appalling cruelty as slaves to the Americas between 1500 and 1800. The plantation owners in Brazil, the West Indies, Maryland and the Carolinas grew rich, the merchants of Liverpool and Bristol waxed prosperous from this trade in human misery, salving their consciences with the excuse that people with black skins were sub-human and fit only to labour for the white man. The Irish prisoners

that Cromwell took in 1649, and shipped to the Barbados as slaves, were treated in this way because they were Celts and, worse still, Catholic Celts. In the years 1845-60 some one-and-a-half million Irish died of hunger and disease, or else were forced to emigrate, because of the Famine. Trevelyan, Froude, Carlyle and other British administrators or historians saw the Famine as a natural disaster, but it was a disaster with some advantages as it decreased the native Irish population, and made landlordism more profitable for the Ascendancy. It was roast beef for the Anglo-Saxon Protestants but "yalla meal" for the starving Catholic Irish. If that is not "racism" what is it?

The most horrible mass crime of the 20th century—genocide on a vast and barely comprehensible scale—was the deliberate destruction of European Jewry by the Nazis. The rise of Hitler led to the second world war in which more than twenty million people died. The bloody strife in northern Ireland is on a much smaller scale when compared with these holocausts, but it, too, has elements of racism as well as class and religion in it.

It is facts like these which we should remember when it is sometimes argued that we should ignore the fascist National Front.

PSYCHOLOGY OF PREJUDICE

Psychologists point out that in any society, no matter how democratic or humane, there are likely to be some people who are so mentally disturbed, emotionally maladjusted or morally depraved that they must need hate their fellow men. A few are paranoiacs or psychopaths. These natural bigots are said to have an authoritarian personality, and prefer to live in a powerful, tightly-structured and coercive society. They like strong discipline, and respond to institutions such as the state, church and armed forces which are rigidly hierarchical in their organisation. Freedom of thought or ambiguity in moral values are found by such people to be very difficult to cope with, and there is a rejection of almost any aspect of non-conformity whether it be long hair, abstract art or unusual sexual behaviour. Seeking scapegoats for their personal weaknesses or projecting their frustrations on other people, the innately prejudiced either blame all "out-groups" in general, or else pick on some easily identifiable minority such as the Jews, Catholics or immigrants for the failures in themselves or the society in which they live.

But this individual explanation of racism is only a partial reason for man's inhumanity to man. The historical evidence points overwhelmingly to the fact that, while there are some who may be born to be bigots, in a reasonably healthy society these are likely to be only a small minority. The poor in spirit may always be with us, but the extent of such poverty waxes and wanes with social conditions.

In times of peace and progress, when democracy flourishes and class, ethnic and religious differences are not deliberately institutionalised, the average person does not worry overmuch about distinctions in skin-colour or language. There may be misunderstandings between cultural groups, and occasional social or individual friction, but generally people rub along together from day to day. In any progressive society there is always an element of give-and-take. Tolerance is one of the marks of a civilised community.

A sick society, however, will produce an ever-growing number of sick individuals until the whole nation becomes poisoned as in Nazi Germany or among many whites in South Africa today. During periods of war or economic crisis, or more particularly when deep class distinctions are built into the economic structure, and sections of the population are exploited by other sections, then prejudice, bigotry and sectarianism become the dominant pattern. Racism, instead of being the ranting of a lunatic fringe, becomes the accepted opinion of the ruling class, and from them spreads ever more widely.

Why do most white people in South Africa, Rhodesia or the southern states of the U.S.A. believe in racial discrimination? Not because they suffer from some double dose of original sin, but because their social system is based on the exploitation of the coloured population. Why do so many Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians (who in Britain would be tolerant, even friendly, towards Catholics) remain so bigoted in Northern Ireland? Not because their theology is fundamentally different from their fellow Protestants in other parts of the world, but because they live in a society which has never lost its settler-planter characteristics.

This relationship between ethnic and religious prejudice and specific social conditions may be illustrated with historical examples. Aristotle and Plato were among the greatest philosophers who ever lived, but condoned slavery because ancient Greece was a slave society; the Roman rulers put millions of captured prisoners to work in fields and mines because their empire was based on war and conquest; the Pope and bishops in the Middle Ages accepted serfdom as part of the social order. During the Crusades the infidel Arabs were slaughtered without mercy, and at the time of the Inquisition little pity was shown to Jews or other heretics for the reason that the dominant ideology could not tolerate any challenge to its power and material privileges. Good Christians, both Catholic and Protestant, in 17th and 18th century Europe mostly turned a blind eye to the most atrocious cruelties practised in the slave

trade because large amounts of money were being made from gold, tobacco, cotton and sugar. Capitalists all over the world worshipped the golden calf of profit, even though many grew poor, precisely because they grew rich. It was the Bible, after all, which said long before Karl Marx: "Where thy treasure is, there lies thy heart also."

IMPERIALISM

Imperialism (and its 20th-century offspring, Fascism) has been the biggest single influence in the spread of racist prejudices. During the 16th and 17th centuries the Spanish conquistadores captured large territories in central and south America, and Portuguese power spread into Brazil, the Indies, Angola and Mozambique. Both countries were deeply involved in the slave trade. France, Holland, Belgium and Britain soon followed the Iberian example of conquest and exploitation, and, by the end of the 19th century, millions of square miles of land and hundreds of millions of black, brown and yellow peoples were brought under the control of white Europeans. Germany was late on the scene, but tried to catch up in the colonial race in Africa. Czarist influence spread into Asia and other lands, and the Russian empire became, as Lenin said, a "prison house of nations".

The economic benefits to Europe were enormous, bringing to the white peoples of that region access to cheap food and raw materials, wider markets for manufactured goods, and a vast reservoir of poorly-paid labour. Capital invested in the colonies brought in much bigger dividends than money invested in the homeland. A vast exploitative network was created in which a large proportion of the upper classes, merchants, bankers and ship-owners, West Indian plantation owners and East Indian nabobs, officers in the armed services and administrators of the new territories, manufacturers and the whole rentier class gained new wealth and privileges. Some of this surplus money spread down into the middle and lower middle classes. Skilled workers, too, benefited from the cheaper food and raw materials, and their real wages rose.

In these economic circumstances, imperialist ideology — which had as one of its central themes the concept of superior and inferior races — spread rapidly in Europe. Racism became firmly established as a respectable doctrine. History was invariably taught from an ethno-centric viewpoint, and culture given a strongly nationalist bias. The dominant languages such as German, English, Russian and French were expanded at the expense of the smaller linguistic groups such as Polish, Irish, Welsh or Breton. Basques and Catalans were oppressed by

Spaniards. This *Kulturkampf*, as the Germans called it, received a peculiarly nasty twist in the development of the idea that the Teutonic, Anglo-Saxon or Nordic (the terms were really interchangeable) peoples, physically tall and blond, and speaking an Aryan language, were somehow stronger and more intelligent than other peoples. This Aryan myth was ruthlessly used by scholars to denigrate all Celtic, Slav and Mediterranean peoples, and particularly against the Jews, who spoke a Semitic language. French racial prejudice was stirred by the publication in 1853 of Gobineau's notorious essay on *The Inequality of Races* which attributed most of the world's ills to the alleged evils of miscegenation or mixed breeding.

A further distortion of the scientific truth arose from the discoveries of Charles Darwin, whose evolution theory was twisted to suit the racialists. According to this thesis, which became known as "social Darwinism", the human species could be compared with other plants and animals among which there was a constant fight to exist. In this struggle, the strong endured but the weak died out, with beneficial consequences for the whole species. Genocide, or the destruction of smaller ethnic groups and weaker cultures, could thus be vindicated on the grounds that this was the best way in which civilisation could progress. Public opinion at this time was also diverted away from the real scientific issues by crackpot ideas about skull-shapes and eugenics. Mendel's discovery of the true nature of heredity was ignored.

THE MERE IRISH

Ireland, being England's oldest colony, has suffered longest from this kind of systematic national denigration, and there is a well-documented record going back several centuries of how the native Gaels have always been treated as social and cultural inferiors by their powerful neighbours. Giraldus Cambrensis began the ethnic abuse in 1185, and it has continued almost without interruption down to the anti-Irish jokes in our own day. The poet Edmund Spenser's famous essay on "the mere Irish" summed up the Elizabethan viewpoint. The concept of a Pale within which lived a civilised people (the Anglo-Normans), and outside of which dwelt barbarians (the Irish) conveyed the idea of two distinct groups, one human, the other barely so. The forcible transfer of land from native owner to alien invader, Cromwell's ruthless wars, the penal laws of the 18th century and the Famine of the 19th century—all these were forms of attempted genocide. The very word "Ascendancy" was as brutal in its implications as the German *herrenvolk* or the Boer *basskap*.

The centuries-old attempts to break the spirit of the native Irish, and to convince them that they were fit only to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, became part of nationalist folklore: and the response has been the struggle for freedom and independence.

But what is perhaps not so well known to republicans and anti-imperialists is that the abuse of the Irish people was part of a much wider attack on all colonial subjects. Black, brown, yellow and Celtic peoples were all in varying degrees the objects of hatred and derision. The particular target for scorn might vary from time to time, and from country to country, depending upon historical circumstances (the Indian Mutiny of 1857, the Jamaican revolt of 1865, and the Irish risings of 1848 and 1867 were examples), but the general hostility was much the same. The abusive language used—Papists, wogs, niggers, yids, bogmen, coolies, kaffirs, gypos—was specific but the message was universal. "Croppies lie down" or "Kill the uppity nigger" carried the same meaning—keep your place and don't dare challenge your masters.

A favourite tactic was to imply that colonial peoples were sub-human, savage, just down from the trees. Doctors made physical comparisons between negroes and apes, trying to prove by means of skull shapes and jaw measurements that the black man was closely related to the monkey. Some scholars even suggested that monkeys and human beings could interbreed. Similarly, there were frequent portrayals (especially in the cartoons of Cruikshank and Tenniel) of Irishmen with long upper lips and prognathous jaws. Some of *Punch's* most savagely anti-Irish drawings of the 1880s show a character entitled Mr. O'Simian rather like a gorilla, wearing a Paddy caubeen hat and smoking a clay pipe.

Natives (the English were fond of using the word native) were described as poor and backward, speaking languages which were outlandish and incomprehensible. They worked too little and drank too much. Feckless and irresponsible (these were other favourite words), they lacked the Puritan respect for hard work. Dirt and squalor were their chief characteristics. The Irish kept pigs, the Chinese had a peculiar odour, the Indians smelt of curry. Negroes sat in the sun all day, and were shameless in their nakedness and lack of sexual modesty; the Irish might be more chaste but they, too, bred like rabbits. Jews were avaricious, and anyone living east of the Suez Canal was a wily oriental gentleman, not to be trusted and incapable of keeping his word or a bargain. As for religion, the heathen Chinese and the pagan Africans were only a shade worse than the benighted Papists of Dublin, Cork and Galway. Missionaries

(Protestant, of course) were needed to get them all back on the true path to salvation.

When exploitation was profitable and the niggers not too restless then Black Sambo might roll his eyes and do a soft-shoe shuffle to amuse his masters. If Ireland was in a state of comparative peace then Paddy the stage Irishman could be brought out to sing a song or indulge in a bit of Blarney.

Jews and Irish

If some of the natives were forced by circumstances to leave their impoverished homelands and seek work in Britain then they met with a common hostility.

The Irish flooding into London, Glasgow, Liverpool and Manchester in the 1840s and 1850s, for example, were criticised (the words quoted are taken from contemporary sources) for "living an animal existence" in a "miasma of filth", and "forming a kind of substratum beneath a more civilised community". Working in "the lowest depths of manual labour", they were accused of speaking an incomprehensible language, "herding together", and creating a "distinct community in the midst of the English". They were said to be "violent", of indulging in "disorderly behaviour", and "suffering from unthrifty and irregular habits", as well as being petty thieves. A particular crime they committed was illicit distilling. On the one hand, they were said to be reluctant to join British trade unions and therefore undercut local wages, while on the other hand they were "agitators" and "Fenians".

The Jews, escaping to the east end of London and Leeds from Czarist persecution in the 1890s, were denounced as "alien hordes" and "foreign undesirables". Their religious practices, like those of the Catholic Irish, were strange and unwelcome in Protestant England. Unskilled and not knowing the native language, they were regarded as fit only for the poorest jobs, but were then blamed for swarming into "sweated trades". They "lacked elementary hygiene" like the Irish. The newcomers were noted for their "ghetto mentality", for their "self-centredness" and "forming a society apart". "There were some streets you go through and you would hardly know you were in England," lamented a witness in the 1890s. The Jewish immigrants were said to be greedy and prone to money-lending. Their special weakness was white slavery. Just as the Irish were charged with being terrorists, so the Jews were accused of being socialist, nihilists and anarchists.

The propaganda campaign of the National Front and Right-wing Tories like Enoch Powell against coloured immigrants in the 1960s and 1970s is in similar vein to the earlier attacks on the Irish and Jews—there is the same emotive language, the same stereotyping, the same primitive appeals to bigots and xenophobes.

LESSER BREEDS WITHOUT THE LAW

This abuse of immigrants was not just the outpourings of a lunatic fringe or the hostility of uneducated masses against strangers and foreigners. The most striking aspect of this anti-alien and pro-white Anglo-Saxon Protestant propaganda of late 19th-century Britain was that the crudest attacks often came from the most respectable members of society. The nobility, leading politicians and administrators, noted clergymen, and prominent academics from Oxford and Cambridge, philosophers, scientists and famous writers all joined in the chorus of criticism against the "lesser breeds without the law". A kind of ethno-centric chauvinist mania gripped the upper classes.

The Earl of Beaconsfield, twice Prime Minister and a close friend of Queen Victoria, for example, was obsessed with racial problems in spite of the fact that he was by descent a Jew. His views of the Irish were typical of his class and period: "The Irish hate our free and fertile isle," he wrote. "They hate our order, our civilisation, our enterprising industry, our decorous liberty, our pure religion. This wild, reckless, indolent, uncertain and idolatrous race have no sympathy with the British character. Their fair ideal of human felicity is an alternation of clannish broils and coarse idolatry. Their history describes an unbroken circle of bigotry and blood." So much for the land of saints and scholars!

Lord Salisbury, who succeeded Disraeli as Tory leader and was Prime Minister three times, was so disturbed by the prospect of Irish independence that he said in the 1886 election campaign in which Gladstone was advocating Home Rule that the Irish were like "Hottentots and other races incapable of self government". In his view public money should rather be spent on securing the emigration of a million Irishmen than in buying out a single landlord; all Ireland needed was "twenty years of resolute government".

Arthur Balfour, who was chief secretary in Ireland and later Prime Minister just after the Boer War, was so carried away with this mood of imperial arrogance that he wrote: "All law, all civilisation in Ireland are the work of England".

Joseph Chamberlain, Tory colonial secretary in the 1890s, went even further in this vein of Nordic conceit: "I believe in this race," he wrote, "the greatest governing race the world has ever seen; in this Anglo-Saxon race, so proud, so tenacious, self-confident and determined, this race which neither climate nor change can degenerate, which will infallibly be the predominant force of future history and universal civilisation."

The poets were hardly any better in their national pride. Tennyson boasted that "fifty years of Europe was worth a

cycle of Cathay". Charles Kingsley, the Anglican clergyman who became famous as a novelist and writer of verse, visited Ireland after the Famine but showed little pity for the starving inhabitants. Ireland, he said, was a "horrible country" haunted by "human chimpanzees". Kipling was one of the most violent opponents of Home Rule and wrote a poem in 1912 praising the virtues of Carson and Craig.

The worst bigots of the period were the historians—who should have known better because their studies should have given them some balance and objectivity. The most famous and influential of them, Macaulay, Green, Stubbs, Freeman, Acton, Carlyle and Froude (Acton was a Catholic but that did not stop him being an imperialist) were all unrepentant advocates of white Anglo-Saxon Protestantism. Their extraordinarily ethno-centric views of history are carefully documented in such recent books as *Apes and Angels* by L. P. Curtis, the American, and the *West Indians and British Historians* by Eric Williams, the Trinidadian scholar.

Thomas Carlyle, the Scot who became Victorian England's favourite philosopher and political writer, was one of Europe's first Fascists. A power-worshiper who preceded Nietzsche in his advocacy of the rule of the hero, he was a notorious anti-Semite and negro-baiter. When the Jamaican revolt of 1865 was put down with great cruelty, and hundreds of coloured plantation workers hanged without trial, he rushed to organise the defence of the governor. He was one of the leading supporters in England of the southern states in the American civil war. Two of his most popular books were a eulogy of Cromwell, and an attack on the French Revolution. It was reported recently in Goebbels' diary that in Hitler's last days in the Berlin bunker he had Carlyle's study of Frederick the Great read to him.

Carlyle visited Ireland on two occasions soon after the Famine—on one of these tours he met John Mitchel—and instead of denouncing the British government's failure to alleviate suffering more effectively, or attacking the absentee landlord system, his journal is full of bad-tempered criticism of what he calls this "brawling unreasonable people". Ireland in his words was a "huge suppuration", "human swinery", "an abomination of desolation", "a black howling Babel of superstitious savages".

James Anthony Froude wrote a more measured prose-style as befitted a professor of history in Oxford, but he expressed essentially the same views as his fellow-historian. He was a frequent visitor to Ireland, wrote a novel about the country, and his *Ireland in the 18th Century* was for many years a

standard textbook. As an admirer of the Teutons (he found by some mysterious process that the "rugged lowland Scots" were Teutons), he regarded the Celts as "essentially unfit for freedom"; and as an ardent evangelical Protestant he despised the "idolatrous Catholics". In his opinion the Irish had been "savages" before the Normans came to civilise them. He was quite unabashed in his defence of the strong against the weak, and stated openly that he regarded superior power "as the equivalent of superior merit". He claimed that he could not understand the "unappeasable discontent" of the Irish. Froude, like Carlyle, was interested in the West Indies, and visited the islands there. Returning with all his anti-negro prejudices reinforced, he concluded that slavery was not as bad a system as its critics had made it out to be, and could be justified in certain circumstances because negroes were innately an "inferior race", "half-reclaimed savages", and "cannibals not long ago".

E. A. Freeman, who was regius professor in Oxford, got so carried away with his Anglo-Saxonism that he wrote to a friend from New Haven, Connecticut, in 1881: "This would be a grand land if only every Irishman would kill a negro, and be hanged for it."

CASTE, CLASS AND RELIGION

Judging by the violence of their language, Froude and his fellow imperialists were firmly convinced that God (or destiny or whatever) had marked them out as natural rulers, by birth and breeding the true guardians of the state. But on what rational grounds could this conviction be based? The old doctrine of *vae victis* had to be bolstered by some more morally reputable arguments if non-conformist consciences were to be soothed.

Ireland, after all, had been as culturally advanced as England in the centuries immediately preceding the Norman invasions. The Book of Kells and the Ardagh chalice were products of no mean civilisation. The native Irish, whatever Anglo-Saxon fanatics might say, were of white pigmentation and indisputably of Caucasian stock. They spoke an Aryan language long before English emerged as a definitive tongue, and had a proud literary tradition. How then was British public opinion to be persuaded that the Irish were innately inferior, by nature uncivilised, and certainly not suited to self-government? The answer which came so readily to hand was religion. It was the Orange card—that is, the deliberate widening for political purposes of sectarian divisions within Ireland—which proved such a deadly weapon for the Unionists.

To appreciate why Orangeism became so potent a force, and how it helped shape the history of Anglo-Irish relationships, it is necessary to appreciate the very different ways in which the Protestant religion developed on each side of the Irish Sea. Why, in brief, was Cromwell regarded as a patriotic parliamentarian in England and a bloodstained tyrant in Ireland?

In Britain the Protestant faith, for understandable historical reasons, became identified with the country's independence and defiance against Catholic Spain and France. In its formative phase it was the religion of the rising middle classes and democracy against an autocratic king. The reformed churches embraced almost all sections of the population, and in that sense were democratic institutions. So when Orangemen sing the old song about "The old cause which gave us freedom, religion and laws" they touch a deep nerve in the Protestant psyche.

In Ireland the pattern was completely different. Protestantism was not an indigenous growth—it was imported by planters who imposed themselves on the native Catholics by force. The soldiers and settlers who conquered Ireland in the 17th and 18th centuries considered themselves to be of different ethnic origins from the Irish. They mostly spoke a foreign tongue, and were of separate stock.

Finally, and most important of all, they were an Ascendancy, and a minority Ascendancy at that. By the end of the 18th century the Protestants, who comprised never more than one-quarter of the total population, occupied more than nine-tenths of the country's fertile land. They had an almost complete monopoly of trade and industry, dominated the professions, and commanded the army and navy. Government was in the hands of Westminster which was itself 100 per cent Protestant in composition. Protestantism, in other words, was the religion of the middle and upper classes, a ruling establishment. The fact that there were poor Protestants in Ireland does not invalidate this conclusion any more than the fact that there are poor whites in South Africa or Mississippi undermines the argument that there is a white supremacy in those regions.

This political and economic aspect of the Ascendancy was reinforced by that other basic belief held by so many Protestants, namely that they were also morally superior to Catholics. The new theological doctrines emerging from the Reformation had convinced most Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians that they, and they alone, possessed the one true faith. There were bickerings between the various reformed denominations, but they were all quite sure that the Papists were destined for hell and damnation. The historian Lecky, writing of the 18th century, said: "... the most worthless

Protestant, even if he had nothing else to boast of, at least found it pleasing to think that he was a member of a dominant race." Bernard Shaw wrote in 1898: "Irish Protestantism was not then a religion: it was a side in a political faction, a class prejudice, a conviction that Roman Catholics are socially inferior persons who will go to Hell when they die and leave Heaven in the exclusive possession of Protestant ladies and gentlemen".

This doctrine that all the virtues were on one side of the religious divide, and all the vices on the other, was preached everywhere in schools, churches, books, and on public platforms throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, and as it became firmly established it was just one more step to stereotyping Protestants and Catholics in the same way as white and coloured people were stereotyped in other parts of the empire. Protestants, according to this thesis, were pictured as hard-working, thrifty, sober people who obeyed the law and honoured the king. Catholics, in contrast, were portrayed as poorly-educated, superstitious, prone to worship statues and bow down before priests. They were mostly dirty and unreliable. A few actually joined seditious organisations. (The reverse side of this bigotry was found among those Catholics who proclaimed that they would be saved, while the Protestants could not hope for salvation.)

The most exaggerated form of this self-righteousness was to be found, as Jack White points out in his *Minority Report*, among the Presbyterians and evangelicals. Calvinism taught that people could be divided into the saved and the damned, the elect and the non-elect, saints and sinners; and there was no doubt on which side were the Presbyterians.

The evangelicals who flocked into Ireland in the mid-19th century were so carried away with missionary zeal that they seemed to lose contact with all commonsense. What are we to make, for example, of this piece of advice given by a leader of the Irish Church Mission to clergymen who were going to proselytise among the Irish peasantry? "I know what miserable, grovelling, ignorant, superstitious creatures they [the Catholic Irish] are," wrote the Rev. Alexander Dallas. "You must learn to love them in the midst of their degeneration. If their filth, and folly and superstition and passion repel your love, you are not fit to go in the midst of them. You must be able to see the jewel of God in the midst of the dunghill, and condescend to scavenge for it." Dallas was a bigot, of course, and his language exceptionally scurrilous even for those times, but his opinions about "folly and superstition" were widely held by Protestant clergymen on both sides of the Irish Sea.

RACE AND THE IRISH

The following statement expressing opposition to Fascist and extreme Right-wing organisations has been signed by thirty prominent members of the Irish community in Britain and Ireland. The signatures are available for inspection in the Connolly Association office, and are given in a personal capacity.

RACIALIST ORGANISATIONS IN BRITAIN

We the following representatives of Labour and democratic opinion within the Irish community, at home and abroad, urge upon our countrymen in England the importance of giving no support to Fascism in any shape or form, and of opposing it in every legitimate way.

The emergence of organisations claiming to express the patriotism of English people, but really seducing them into the expression of racial hatred and antagonism to organised labour, is a matter of grave concern.

The Irish community in Britain is particularly vulnerable and has already had a taste of what persecution means.

Racialism is an evil. It is condemned by the leaders of all religious denominations. Wherever it gets a hold it divides the working people into warring camps, thus stultifying their ability to combine for economic and social advancement. It is totally irrational and attempts to justify excesses that fly in the face of commonsense.

Moreover, it is not as if the racial policies of such organisations as the National Front could ever be put into practice. The absurd proposal to pack off people born in England to countries that will not accept them is only an excuse for working up hatred against them. The solution must be found where they are.

The only way forward is one based on the common effort of all the people actually living in a country. If there is unemployment, let the Government create work. If there are housing shortages, let them employ the thousands of building workers, many of them Irish, who are walking the streets. The means by which these things can be done have already been pointed out by the Trades Union Congress and others.

We urge our countrymen not to be backward in spreading opposition to a creed which is indeed the last-born child of the old imperialism, and contrary to everything that Irish tradition has stood for through the ages.

At the same time we caution against acts of extremism by small groups, which repel ordinary people and play into the hands of the racialists.

Fascism could come to Britain, but it need not come. The way to prevent it is by the united opposition of the labour and trade union movement, the churches and democratically-minded citizens of all views.

Andrew Barr (Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Belfast), Pat Carroll (city councillor, Dublin), Hugh Cassidy (T. & G.W.U., London), Anthony Coughlan (economist, Dublin), Maire Comerford (author, Co. Dublin), Hugh D'Arcy (Scottish T.U.C., Edinburgh), John de Courcy (author, Dublin), Paddy Devlin (Belfast), Tony Donaghey (N.U.R., London), Gerry Fitt, M.P. (Belfast), Tom Foley (A.S.T.M.S., London), Joe Gormley (N.U.M., London), C. Desmond Greaves (London), Noel Harris (A.S.T.M.S., Dublin), Sean Hogan (United Ireland Association, Manchester), Peter Kavanagh (T. & G.W.U., London), John B. Keane (author, Kerry), Jack Kennedy (U.C.A.T.T., London), Sean Morrissey (I.T. & G.W.U., Belfast), Tom Leonard (N.U.R., London), Owen Conneeney, (councillor, Manchester), Donal MacAmhlaigh (author, Northampton), Michael McGahey (N.U.M., Edinburgh), Michael Mullen (general secretary, I.T. & G.W.U., Dublin), Dr John O'Connell, T.D. (Dublin), Peadar O'Donnell (author), Michael O'Halloran, M.P. (London), Pádraig O'Snodaigh (historian, Dublin), Betty Sinclair (former secretary, Belfast Trades Council), Michael O'Loinsigh (Irish Sovereignty Movement, Dublin), Frank Taggart (U.C.A.T.T., London), Joe Whelan (N.U.M., Nottingham).

THE ORANGE CARD

Politically, the Orange card had one other striking advantage for the Unionists—it was the ideal means of continuing to separate people in Ireland along that most sensitive of all lines—religion—and making sure that all Protestants in the country, regardless of sect, would stay united against the Catholics. If class privileges, ethnic identity and religious allegiance—what one writer delicately calls “interest and sentiment”—could be so tied together that Catholics and Protestants were always at each other's throats then the real struggle—which should have been about national independence and democratic rights for all the population—could be diverted into endless sectarian warfare. If doctrinal differences arising from the Reformation, instead of being allowed to die a natural death, could be constantly stirred up and aggravated, then the potential progressive forces would never unite against the common enemy. Such was the essence of the Orange strategy, and very successful it proved to be in the interests of landlordism and imperialism.

The sectarian weapon was therefore employed whenever the Irish national movement gained strength, or more particularly when it seemed to attract democratically-inclined Protestants into its ranks. Significantly the Orange Order was founded in 1795 when many Ulster dissenters, who were suffering jointly with Catholics under the Anglican establishment, showed sympathy for republican France and began to join the United Irishmen. This tactic of widening the gap wherever possible in a period of crisis between Catholic and Protestant is well illustrated in a letter which Brigadier General Knox wrote to the commander-in-chief of the British Army in Ireland in 1797. I hope to “increase the animosity between Orangemen and the United Irishmen,” said Knox. “Upon that animosity depends the safety of the centre counties of the North. Were the Orangemen disarmed or put down, or were they coalesced with the other (United Irish) party, the whole of Ulster would be as bad as Antrim and Down.” Russell, Hope, McCracken, Rowan, Tandy, Neilson and other leaders of the 1798 rising were Protestants, and the tragedy was that this democratic and republican Protestantism weakened for various reasons in Ulster in the 19th century. Orangeism was used again in the anti-Catholic pogroms in Belfast in the 1850s and 1860s, and most importantly in the 1880s when Randolph Churchill advised that “the Orange card was the one to play” against Parnell. The same deadly ace, with the same deadly consequences, was used to block the Home Rule movement in 1911-1914.

The partition of Ireland in 1921 was imperialism's master stroke in this old policy of divide and rule. The historic territory, which had been one unit since time immemorial, was split into two parts; the national independence movement fell asunder on the issue of partition, and pro-Treatyites and anti-Treatyites fought a bitter civil war; in the new six-county state, whenever Protestant democracy showed signs of wishing jointly with Catholics to take up issues such as poverty, bad housing or unemployment, the sectarian mobs were brought on to the street. To assuage the liberal conscience in Britain there was the added advantage for the Tories that the new régime was apparently democratic because Protestants were in a minority and regularly returned Unionists to office with huge votes.

The Unionists thus had a freer hand than ever to strengthen and reinforce their traditional Ascendancy. Under the Stormont régime they had the power to institutionalise the centuries-old divisions within the community, and this they set out systematically to do in parliament, the civil service, local government, legal system, police and housing and, if the opportunity arose, also with regard to capital investment, employment and voluntary organisations. The ruling party's policy, in other words, was not to bridge the gulf separating different sections of the population, but further to widen it.

The nationalists could never win an election and modify this power structure so long as voting continued along sectarian lines, and British governments were only too willing to turn a blind eye to political abuses so long as imperial interests were not threatened. If the natives got restless then the British Army was there in the last resort to put them down. The result was that Orangeism became ever more arrogant and domineering. A real *herrenvolk* mentality was spread among the Protestant people.

When criticised for this distortion of normal democratic procedures the Unionists deny the charges against them, and allege that it is all republican propaganda. But the facts, which are supported by a mass of well-documented evidence, much of it from neutral sources, are irrefutable.

(1) Northern Ireland had the same political party in power for over half a century. Catholics were not normally admitted to the ruling party, and no Catholic was ever invited to join the Cabinet in spite of the fact that Catholics comprised a third of the population. Gerrymandering was systematically used, especially in Derry and Fermanagh, to rig the voting system so that Catholics would not get their fair representation in local and central government. The most famous of their prime

ministers, Sir James Craig, actually boasted that his parliament was for one section of the people only.

(2) The Unionist Party and the Orange Order, politics and religion, were indissolubly linked. Unionist M.P.s and cabinet ministers took it for granted that they would participate in Orange meetings and demonstrations, and every year leading figures would march in their bowler hats and Orange sashes on July 12th. Protestant bishops and clergy were always prominent in the Orange Order.

(3) Jobs were distributed, not for merit or qualifications, but largely on basis of alleged loyalty to the regime. There were "Protestant" occupations (mainly well-to-do farmers, businessmen, professional people, senior and middle civil servants, and skilled workers) and there were "Catholic" occupations (mainly poor farmers, lesser professions serving the Catholic population, and unskilled workers).

(4) Unemployment was high everywhere, but it was much worse among Catholics. The government deliberately diverted investment resources where possible to loyalist areas, especially east of the river Bann, and Sir Basil Brooke, who succeeded James Craig as prime minister, actually was proud of the fact that, as he said, "I have not an R.C. about the place". "There are a great number of Protestants and Orangemen who employ Roman Catholics", said Brooke in his speech in Fermanagh in 1933; "I would appeal to Loyalists whenever possible to employ good Protestant lads and lasses".

This notorious remark is often quoted because of the public position held then and later by Brooke, but the sentiments were widely expressed by influential employers all over the country. Nationalist Newry, Derry and Strabane, for example, had two or three times as many out of work on average as compared to Unionist Lurgan, Portadown and Bangor. Belfast as a whole has suffered from severe unemployment for more than half a century, but the figures were always much worse (sometimes as high as twenty or thirty per-cent) in Catholic West Belfast.

(5) The allocation of council housing was in charge of local administrative bodies, and there was persistent favouritism shown to Protestant families when the council was Unionist controlled. This bias was so flagrant that a central housing executive had eventually to be set up by the London government after 1969. No doubt there would have been similar discrimination in payment of social welfare benefits but for the fact that these were the responsibility of Westminster, and not Stormont.

(6) The final coping stone in this edifice of *apartheid* (or preferential treatment for one section of the population) was the segregation of people in residential ghettos, schools, and to a lesser extent clubs and societies. Marriage between men and women of different denominations was discouraged on all sides. This segregation was usually voluntary, and in the case of schools and marriage the Catholics were sometimes to blame as much as the Protestants, but the whole idea of "separateness" was a reflection of the deep rooted dichotomy in the country's social structure—a dichotomy encouraged by the ruling class for three centuries.

Summing up all this historical evidence, there can be no doubt that Northern Ireland was, and still is, a colonial state in which "racist" attitudes were promoted at every level. The historian Liam de Paor expresses the present situation simply but accurately when he writes: "Catholics (in the six counties) are blacks who happen to have white skins".

PROTESTANT ASCENDANCY AND WHITE SUPREMACY

In their conviction that they were a chosen people to whom God had granted certain deserved privileges the Orange extremists resembled that other deeply entrenched political and religious elite, the Afrikaners. Northern Ireland and South Africa differ from each other in many ways, and many Unionists would deny that they are racialists in the Boer sense of the term. Nevertheless, the caste structure and the ideology of the two states have been very similar, and their history and political outlook have much in common. The Calvinist parallels, to which attention has already been drawn, are very striking.

In both countries invaders seized the land from the native inhabitants; both have caste systems preaching a perverted form of Christianity which does not resemble the true teachings of Christ; both deliberately encourage discrimination against subordinate ethnic groups; and both systems are unstable and prone to violence because they are inherently undemocratic.

It is significant that when that archetypal Orangeman, the late Lord Brookeborough, was asked in a television interview shortly before he died what country he would like to live in if ever Unionism was defeated in Northern Ireland, he at first denied the possibility of such a dire event; but when pressed he admitted that he would prefer to live in, not monarchist Britain as might be expected from such a keen loyalist, but in a republican South Africa, where apparently the true Orange virtues flourished.

The problem of national identity affects both these strife-ridden countries. The Orangemen are not sure (or so the public opinion polls indicate) whether they are British, Ulster-Scots, Irish, or have some special identity as Ulstermen, while the Afrikaners have their own distinct language and culture, but cannot make up their minds as to how far they will go in allying themselves with their old English-speaking enemies against the Bantus, coloureds and Asians. This confusion about who they really are, and their internal divisions, make them uneasy with other ethnic groups and also with foreign countries. South Africa is now ostracised by the United Nations, and the sectarian violence in Northern Ireland is a grave embarrassment to the Common Market countries.

A group which feels itself beleaguered needs foes, real or imaginary, to sustain morale against possible threats; it also needs rituals and ceremonies to rally the faithful when hearts grow faint or old battles forgotten. In both Pretoria and Belfast this sense of siege or laager is strong. The Orange Order has its initiation ceremonies, its marching bands, flying banners, and constantly resurrected memories of Apprentice Boys and Derry's walls; the Boers, too, have their Broederbond, secret rituals, blood and soil rallies, and fierce pride in the Great Trek.

The two states have links with 17th-century Holland in which an extreme form of Puritanism was associated with a new form of merchant capitalism. Van Riebeck, who settled in the Cape of Good Hope in 1642, and William III, who landed in Antrim in 1690, had the common purpose of capturing what land they could and also imposing the rule of the Saints as they saw it. In the minds of these soldiers and settlers God and Mammon were inextricably mixed (as they were with Catholic adventurers like Cortes and Pizarro), and every kind of atrocity and greed could be justified on the grounds of morality and true religion.

The ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church and Paisley's Free Presbyterians speak a very similar theological language, with an acceptance of the literal truth of everything written in the Bible (except, as a cynic might say, loving one's neighbour), including the story of Genesis. Such preachers are fundamentalists of the old Puritan type; they detest what they call "Popery", and have no time for the modern ecumenical movement within the Christian churches.

As their politico-religious origins were rather alike so there are resemblances between the concepts of Protestant ascendancy and white supremacy. When the prime minister of South Africa, Verwoerd, said in 1948: "South Africa is a white man's country, and he must remain master here," he was merely echoing what Sir James Craig said in Stormont in 1931: "I

have always said that I am an Orangeman first, and a politician afterwards, all I can boast is that we are a Protestant Parliament for a Protestant people."

A manifestly unjust social structure in which large numbers of inhabitants are deliberately kept in a permanently inferior position on the basis of race or religion can only be maintained by special laws and a coercive police. The Northern Ireland government has had a Special Powers Act in operation since the state was founded, and internment without trial has been used systematically to lock up republicans when other evidence could not be found against them. The B. Specials were a carefully chosen political militia, heavily armed and recruiting from one section of the population only. The Royal Ulster Constabulary has always been a predominantly Protestant force.

In South Africa under both British and Boer rule the laws have been even more discriminatory. White English and Afrikaans-speakers may differ in their language and political allegiance, but they share a common determination to keep the coloured population down, regardless of democracy and justice. As in Northern Ireland some lip-service is occasionally paid to classic concepts of law, but behind all the paraphernalia of courts, judges and juries lies the reality of the police state. The judiciary, who are supposed to be independent, see themselves not as defenders of an abstract rule of law but as the supporters at all costs of white hegemony. Since the beginning of the century more than 200 laws and regulations have been passed, all with the central aim of "keeping the nigger in his place".

The preservation of white Rhodesia is another cause dear to the heart of Ulster Unionists. Prayers have frequently been said at Orange rallies for "good old Smith", and Paisley's paper *The Protestant Telegraph* is full of lamentations about the dangers threatened by a curious combination of "Black Africa, the Communist bloc and the liberal democracies" which were, it is alleged, undermining the "firm grip of Christian civilisation" in Africa. The link between the Protestant para-military groups and the white supremacists is emphasised by the fact that disillusioned U.V.F. and U.D.A. members joined the Rhodesian army in 1976. A year later the Portadown branch of Paisley's party, the Democratic Unionists, invited Ian Smith to discuss "common policies with the Loyalists". Presumably, however, Smith was too busy with his own black Fenians to accept the offer.

FASCISM AND THE NATIONAL FRONT

The racism and Orangeism of the 18th and 19th centuries was largely a product of imperialism in the ascendant. The Fascism of the 20th century is mainly the consequence of imperialism in decline.

The break-up of huge empires such as those of Britain, France, Russia, Austro-Hungary, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands was the direct result of two world wars, and the simultaneous class and colonial struggles all over the world. (Lenin, incidentally, pointed out that the rising of Easter 1916 was the first crack in this imperial structure). Capitalism in decay—in spite of partial and temporary revivals—has not produced steady economic growth, stable prices or an improvement in the physical environment. On the contrary, this century in Europe has witnessed a series of major wars, recurring economic crises, dangerous inflations and deflations, a failure to solve the problems of great cities.

In the post-1945 era a further complication for the home countries has been a huge but unplanned movement of large numbers of people across national frontiers. About 15 million migrants, for example, have entered western Europe in search of work and higher living standards during the last thirty years.

Britain, although on the winning side in the war, has suffered severely from these post-imperial withdrawal symptoms. The contraction of political power has been associated with severe economic problems, and this in turn coincided with the influx of about a million and a half coloured immigrants from the so-called New Commonwealth, that is, Pakistan, India, Bangla-Desh, Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Cyprus and the West Indies. Simultaneously more than half a million Irish entered Britain.

When the British economy was expanding in the 1950s and 1960s these immigrants were accepted by the majority of the indigenous population, especially as they took the hard, dirty and ill-paid jobs that the native British workers did not want. Fascist and other extreme right-wing political organisations made little impact with their "hate the coloureds" campaign. But with the onset of economic depression in the 1970s the political scavengers—who can always smell political carrion from afar—began to seek out any prey which was available. Just as the Nazis turned on the Jews as the scapegoats for Germany's troubles between the wars so the National Front has tried to blame the coloured immigrants for Britain's multiplying ills.

When it was founded in 1967 from an amalgamation of the National Socialists, League of Empire Loyalists, National Party and the Greater Britain Movement, the Front was openly Fascist in its programme. John Tyndall, its leader, was an associate of

the pro-Nazi anti-Semite, Colin Jordan. Tyndall was then photographed wearing a swastika, and made no bones about his admiration for Hitler and the corporate state. He described the Jews as "poisonous maggots" and "cancerous microbes". Martin Webster, his second in command, then wrote an article in the official National Socialist magazine entitled "Why I am a Nazi".

In the early 1970s the National Front tried to abandon its former Nazi image, and adopted a more populist policy of attacking the E.E.C. and international finance. Sensing the anxieties of large numbers of still poorly-paid British workers, mainly in the run-down areas of the big cities, who had made some marginal material gains after the war but were again threatened with rising prices and unemployment, they began to concentrate their propaganda against immigrants from the New Commonwealth. The natural fears of local people about rapid changes in culture, language, religion and food habits were ruthlessly exploited.

Simultaneously—and this fact should never be forgotten by the million or more predominantly Catholic and nationalist Irish immigrants in Britain—the National Front enthusiastically took up the cause of Protestant unionism in Northern Ireland. Soon after the Civil Rights Movement (described as "rabble" by the Fascists) began in 1969, the Front's paper *Spearhead* proclaimed that it "stood uncompromisingly on the side of the hard-core loyalists". In November, 1971, there was a march of Front members to the Cenotaph in London at which wreaths were laid for the dead in Rhodesia, South Africa and Ulster. In the spring of the following year there was another demonstration in central London, this time of Ulster Loyalists supported by the National Front.

In May, 1972, a special supplement of *Spearhead* was published devoted solely to the problems of Northern Ireland. The main themes of this publication were:—

- (1) The whole strength of the National Front was firmly behind the Right-wing Unionists.
- (2) Britain should never abandon its "kith and kin" in Ulster and Rhodesia.
- (3) Northern Ireland was of great strategic and military importance to Britain.
- (4) The republican movement was part of a sinister world-wide Marxist conspiracy, and had been so since the days of Connolly.
- (5) Official reports (such as Scarman) suggesting that Orange policies had discriminated against Catholics were ludicrous.
- (6) There should be economic sanctions against the Republic of Ireland.

- (7) Terrorism must be "ruthlessly stamped out" by re-arming the R.U.C., removing "petty restrictions" on the army, and restoring the "necessary powers of interrogation" to the security forces.

In 1973 the Front national conference voted to negotiate an official working alliance with the loyalist movements in Northern Ireland, and contacts were made with members of the U.D.A. and Ulster Volunteer Force. The following year Tyndall threw all his weight in support of the loyalist strike against power sharing. On several occasions during recent years (but usually without much success) the Front tried to form its own branches in Belfast, Larne and other towns.

When a bomb was planted in a Birmingham pub in November, 1974, killing many innocent people, the Fascists were active in stirring up anti-Irish feeling in local factories and pubs. Roy Painter, then one of the active N.F. leaders, commented upon this explosion: "They (the terrorists) could not have done more to help us if they tried."

It was about this period that Tyndall came out with a typically confused outburst. "Ulster Protestants and indeed loyal Ulsterman of all creeds," he wrote, "would do well to come to grips with the New Papacy. Its capital is not Rome and its purposes are not Christian, but it is today the most potent contender for a world monopoly of power. Its financial centre is New York; its forum is the United Nations; it is strangely friendly to the Soviet bloc; its enemy is the survival of national sovereignty, and most of all British national sovereignty. That is why it is attacking Ulster."

This attempt to link the Pope, Communism and international finance (with the Jews thrown in for good measure) is also a feature of Ian Paisley's journal *The Protestant Telegraph*. Paisley is not a Fascist but, judging by the following quotation, he seems menaced by an unlikely combination of political and religious enemies. "Watch the Jews," he wrote in 1967. "Israel is on the way back to favour. . . . Watch the Papist Rome rising to a grand crescendo with the Communists. The Reds are on the march. They are heading for an alliance against the return of the Lord Jesus Christ."

POWELLISM

Enoch Powell, along with the Monday Club and other Right-wing Tories, is another politician who is trying to ride the pro-Ulster and anti-immigrant horses at the same time.

Powell is supposed to pursue his philosophical objectives with relentless tenacity, and never deviate from his chosen path. He obviously sees himself as a master of political logic. But in fact his career has been a tortuous one, full of contradictions and changes of direction. He once passionately admired Nietzsche, the German philosopher who worshipped the superman, but now he claims to be the great advocate of parliamentary democracy; he was formerly an atheist but is now described as an Anglican with Calvinist leanings. As Tory Minister of Health in 1960-63 he was responsible for bringing to British hospitals many black doctors and nurses from overseas, but a year later he denounced coloured immigrants as a grave danger to the British way of life. In 1964 he said that "immigrants who have come already, or who are admitted in the future, are part of the community. Their effective integration is in the interests of all". However, within a short time he was frightening people with talk of "rivers foaming with blood", and of "alien wedges" which could never be integrated.

For most of his political life he showed no interest whatsoever in Ireland, but then suddenly in middle age he rushed to South Down as though it was his ancestral home. In economic affairs he has always been a supporter of the free economy and an enemy of government controls, but for northern Irish industry (especially the hard-hit Harland & Wolff) he apparently accepts government subsidies. Similarly he is against the E.E.C. but does he wish that Common Market financial support for six-county farmers should be withdrawn?

Powell above all considerations claims to be an ardent nationalist—he sees patriotism and the sovereign state as the supreme, almost mystical, embodiment of the community—but it is not at all clear as to what he means by Ulster nationalism. In the six counties there are three broad ethnic strands—the Irish, Ulster-Scots and those descended from the English settlers of the 17th and 18th centuries. Public opinion polls show that the latter two categories are often confused about their national identity, which is not surprising considering that they are from different ethnic origins and once spoke different languages. It is ironic that the ancestors of Ian Paisley and William Craig, two pillars of Protestant Unionism, were presumably Celts, and Catholic Celts at that.

What do Powell, the Monday Club and the National Front mean when they talk about "British nationalism"? To many progressive people the phrase sounds suspiciously like old-fashioned British imperialism. If that is what they mean why don't they have the courage to say so?

Powell, indeed, seems extraordinarily muddled in his definition of nationalism. Ten years ago he wrote: "Nationhood is a baffling thing: for it is wholly subjective. They are a nation who think they are; for there is no other definition." Yet about the same time he said: "The West Indian or Asian does not by being born in England become an Englishman. In law, he becomes a United Kingdom citizen by birth; in fact, he is a West Indian or Asian still." Powell cannot have it both ways. If nationality is a subjective feeling then anyone who thinks himself British (as many West Britons in Ireland once did, and many Jamaicans still do) is British. But Powell argues on the contrary that if you are black or brown, even if you think of yourself as British, then you are, in his words, "a West Indian or Asian still".

Powell was once a classical scholar, and prides himself on his precise use of language. The legend has grown up that he is the most honest and straight-speaking of orators. But in reality his rhetoric is full of half-truths and sophistries, and often seems to be deliberately phrased to appeal not so much to reason and intellect as to the gut responses of his audience. In a flight of fancy he once referred to northern Ireland as "this jewel, a kind of miniature Britain, and a place that might have been invented to prosper". This kind of grandiloquence might go down well with well-to-do unionists in his constituency, but hardly applies to the Catholic unemployed of Newry. What of fifty years of civil strife costing thousands of lives? What of sectarianism and gerrymandering? What of one of the highest continuous unemployment rates in Europe? A very rough and imperfect "jewel" indeed.

The one consistent path that Powell seems to follow is that he has an unerring instinct for sniffing out an area where there is a political bad smell. If there is a tradition locally of bigotry and prejudice, if there are racial or religious hatreds, if poverty and ignorance are widespread, then Powell is there to be found. He rose to prominence in Wolverhampton, a city suffering from racial tensions and enduring severe industrial difficulties; he has gone to Down where once the land was seized by force from its native inhabitants, and as a result has known internecine war for centuries.

At a time in English history when anti-Catholicism should be buried along with all other aspects of bigotry and racism, he returns to the old question of the Protestant succession to the British throne. In a provocative speech appropriately made in the Orange heart of his constituency in December 1978 he said that if Prince Charles married a Catholic this would "portend the eventual surrender of everything that has made us, and keeps us still, a nation". Even the Tory *Daily Telegraph* was forced to admit that this was "inciting sectarian divisions" and "appealing to archaic fears and fantasies".

Powell does not heal the wounds of history, he opens them wider; he does not solve social problems, he makes them worse. The voters of south Down will one day judge him on the truth rather than the myth of his record.

A POPULAR ALLIANCE AGAINST RACISM

Fascism, as we have seen, made some temporary advances in Britain during the 1970s by exploiting public discontent arising from high unemployment and other social problems. There have been attempts to form organisational links with extremist Orange elements in the six counties.

The Irish in Britain and elsewhere have every reason, therefore, to be alert about the efforts to sow confusion in their own ranks, and to divide them from their fellow workers in Britain in the same way as Catholics and Protestants are divided north of the Irish border. But if vigilance should always be our watchword, then equally there is no need for panic or dismay. Racism is a continuing menace but the forces opposed to it are immense and growing daily.

Fascism was decisively defeated in the second world war, and is detested by all democratic people. The old Aryan myths have been exposed for the nonsense they really are. Imperialism is in retreat all over the world, and thousands of millions of black, brown and yellow formerly colonial subjects are no longer willing to be kept in subordination by white Europeans. Powerful international bodies such as U.N.O. and U.N.E.S.C.O have condemned in the strongest terms the racist régime in South Africa. Rhodesia will one day be Zimbabwe. Scientists are now much more objective about the true nature of racial differences, and there is a keener appreciation of the distinction between the progressive nationalism of formerly oppressed ethnic groups, and reactionary chauvinism or imperialism.

The Christian churches, with a few lamentable exceptions, have learnt some of the bitter lessons of recent history, and now stand unequivocally for the view that all peoples, black, brown, yellow and white, are equal in the love of God. Racialism and anti-Semitism, once condoned, are now anathema.

The Pope has repeatedly condemned the segregation or subordination of people on the basis of their birth or heredity as a sin against God. The World Council of Churches has used its sternest language in attacking racism. Bishop Lamont, himself a Catholic Irishman, was recently deported from Rhodesia for his opposition to Smith's apartheid policies. In Britain both Cardinal Hume and Archbishop Coggan have made clear their dislike of the programme and policies of the National Front, and in south London the local Anglican bishop, Dr Stockwood, actually led a street demonstration against Fascism.

In Ireland there is a growing mood of determination among the leaders of the Christian churches (with the exception of the Free Presbyterians) to overcome the old divisions which once so cruelly separated them, and move forward to a more ecumenical future. It is now the practice for Catholics and Protestants, who formerly would seldom cross each other's church thresholds, occasionally to participate in joint religious services.

The Orange card may still win a few cheap tricks, and the N.A.T.O. militarists want to keep their bases in Lough Foyle and Belfast. But the more intelligent Tories know in their hearts that the imperialist game is lost in Ireland. Orangeism is widely regarded as the scandal of Christendom, and is now repudiated by leading Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists and orthodox Presbyterians on both sides of the Irish Sea. To be an out-and-out Orangeman in Britain is now to be in the same category as a vulgar anti-Semite, that is outside the fold of respectable and moderate society. Many Tories, whose predecessors once smiled so kindly on Carson and Craigavon, now privately deplore the antics of Craig, West and Paisley. Mrs Thatcher for the moment finds it convenient to woo the Unionists at Westminster, but as they become more and more electorally embarrassing they could be jettisoned in the same way as Ian Smith in Rhodesia.

Trade unionists, from leaders like Len Murray of the T.U.C. down to the rank-and-file members, are resisting all attempts to split their ranks on racial issues. The anti-Fascist opinions of Irish trade unionists are given on another page. Hostility towards ultra Right-wing authoritarianism and its associated racism is expressed through the Labour, Liberal and Communist

parties, and several other organisations such as the Anti-Nazi League have devoted themselves particularly to fighting racism. There is a growing awareness that the open racism of the National Front and the extreme Orangeism of the ultra Loyalists in northern Ireland have much in common.

James Connolly, with the political prescience so characteristic of him, once warned that if the division between Protestant and Catholic workers in Ulster was to be permitted to be used as an excuse for the Partition of Ireland then there would be a "carnival of reaction North and South". Connolly, as we all know to our bitter cost, proved to be right. How much worse would be the "carnival of reaction" if racists succeeded in permanently setting white against non-white in Britain. It was not for nothing that throughout the ages the slogan of imperialism was "Divide and rule".

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